

# The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, March 11. 1693

Quest. 1. **W**Hether the Devil has not baits enough to allure people to Lust and Vanity, without calling in the Aids of Patch-  
es and Paint? and whether those skins that are bedawb'd with them may not properly enough be call'd painted Sepulchres, since they too often not only cover, but occasion rotten Bones?

Ans. We have formerly given our own Judgments, and the Authority of others on these Points, and told the World, that the best and strictest Casuists assert these things not in themselves unlawful — Not but that in our Opinions 'tis pity any part of a good Face shou'd be cover'd, (tho for a bad one, the larger the Patch the better) and for Paint, we like it yet worse, since it certainly spoils a good Face, or but a tolerable one; and besides, has never been of very good Reputation in the World. But after why, it shou'd be in it self a Sin we can't conceive, any more than a Wash to take out freckles, or Pits of the Small-Pox, the Argument that's brought against one, equally concluding against both, That its an endeavour to make themselves handsomer than God and Nature intended; which besides wou'd cut off all Perukes, if not most other artificial Ornaments. — As for our angry Friends Question, we must beg him not to be as angry with us as he is with the Ladies, if we tell him there's so much railing, and so little reason in't, that 'tis hardly worth answering, and that we can't help thinking there's more of the Devil in one uncharitable Censure, than in a whole Boxfull of Half-moons and Lozenges.

Quest. 2. A certain Man that lives in B — Lane, London, is possess'd with a very odd Fancy, that a Woman who lives in Covent-Garden calls to him in a Speaking-Trumpet; nay, which makes it yet more pleasant and Romantick, that he hears her when he is 30 or 40 miles distant from the Town, and notwithstanding all the arguments his Friends can use to dissuade him from so ridiculous a Whim, he can never be either reason'd or laugh'd out of it. The Fact we can assure you is true, the Persons name is W — t, and lives as abovementioned: Your Thoughts upon the Matter, and Advice how to satisfy the Man, is desir'd with some earnestness by — your &c.

Ans. One of the pleasantest Whims this, that has been the talk of Athens for some time, and cou'd we but get one of this Gentlemans Speaking-Trumpets of the newest Edition, we might almost Answer all our Querists by word of mouth. But to give an exact Judgment on the Case, We ought to have had a fuller account of the Person, whether his Brain is lookt upon to be right by his Neighbours; or (if we shan't be thought almost as wild as he for making such a Question) whether any of his Friends ever heard this admirable Voice besides him, (for it may be Witchcraft, who knows?) In the mean while we are shrewdly inclin'd to believe that this noise is rather in the Mans Head than his Ears, and that all things are not well thereabouts; and if we happen to guess right, we doubt there is but one way to convince him he's in the wrong, and that is, procuring him a small apartment in Bedlam, where the clank of his Chains wou'd very probably in a few Weeks time quite drown the noise of his Long-winded Speaking-Trumpet.

Quest. 3. I have for some years last past been under some very afflictive Circumstances, of which I must own I have been too sensible, not only to the impairing my Health, but in some moments even my Reason cou'd hardly support it self against the Efforts of my Melancholly, the unhappy Cause of which still remains, but the pleasing Conversation of an Ingenious young Gentleman, hath suspended the greatest part of my Inquietude. We believe the Thoughts we have for each other terminate in Friendship only, but shou'd we be deceiv'd it wou'd very much contribute to both our Misfortunes, since insurmountable Obstacles oppose our being one anothers —

I entreat your Advice in this Emergency, whether I am to renounce a Conversation from which I have found such advantageous effects, and by consequence relapse into my former uneasiness, or to continue it, tho with the danger of liking it too well. But before you give your Sentence, which I'll assure you I'll submit to, be pleas'd to take notice, that the Fears I express, are rather the result of other Peoples misfortunes in the same Case, than of any discovery I have yet made of amorous Symptoms either in the Gentleman or my Self?

Ans. To be plain, Madam, its no very good Symptom that you are so unwilling to part with this Young Gentlemans Conversation, since we think an Old Gentlemans might be at least as instructive, tho we must own not so divertive — and besides, you seem very sensibly concern'd, lest this Friendship of yours shou'd grow too warm, and your Comforter apply himself too closely to drive away — Of foregone Ills, the very fate, as our Friend Cowley expresses it, and as you know, Madam, the grateful Gentleman did for the fam'd Ephesian Matron. All the Question is, of what Nature those terrible insurmountable Obstacles are vvvhich vvvon't let you be one anothers. If Virtue and Religion stand in the way, and there's either Husband, Wife, or Parents between, these we confels ought to be insurmountable, tho too often they are not, but the nimble God flies at all, and his blinder Potaries stumble after him, tho with the hazard of more than their necks. If there's nothing but a false Honour between, We vvou'd be understood difference of Estate, or Quality, down vvwith the foolish Idol of Custom, which as Mr. Cowley agen, — "Is neither fit — nor to defend, or (much leis) to &c. and fall a comforting one another as virtuously as closely and as effectually as ever you are able. But on the other side, if either true Prudence forbid the Banes, We mean, if there's not Estate enough of either side both to live happily, or a too great disproportion in Age, and much more if Virtue lays her naked Sword between you, if these are the Obstacles, never attempt to force thro' em, which if you do, to avoid Scylla you'll find a Charybdis; and if things be so, especially if Virtue and true Honour stand in the way, remember that Love is too soft and fine a name for so rough and criminal a Passion — the least symptoms of which, if you find in your self or your Friend, and are willing to stop short of Hell, you must run the hazard of relapsing into your former Inquietudes, rather than preposterously go about to cure a prick in your Finger by a stab at your Heart; especially when we can't see why Religion and Reason should not be as effectual helps against melancholly, as the Conversation of a Young Gentleman — And this must be done in time immediately, and effectually, for that Passion makes large strides where 'tis indulg'd, and especially if it walks Incognito, (as the Lyon will run when no Body sees him, or he's near his Prey) nor ever flatter your selves that your Intentions are not Criminal, since they must be so whether you please to believe it or not, if the Passion it self be so, and either of you a forbidden Object, (of which see the famous Case in Bp. Sanderon) This perhaps out of abundant caution, which however can do no hurt here, tho in other cases, spite of the Proverb, it may and often does. But if there appear no danger of Love, on a just and impartial Enquiry on both sides, there's no reason we think that the Lady or Gentleman shou'd rob themselves, or one another of so valuable and honourable a Friendship: And this is the best decision and Advice we can give, while yet so hood-winkt as to matter of Fact.

Quest. 4. A Gent. of my acquaintance, of a very plentiful Estate, very Personable, with all desirable accomplishments of Behaviour, Learning, and an excellent Temper, I cou'd almost say without Faults, has Courted several Ladies,

and





and of a meaner rank than himself, and less Fortunes, yet never could be so happy as to gain the Love of any he has Address'd to, which makes him almost Despair, having a great Inclination to Matrimony: It might be worth the while for you, Gentlemen, to Enquire into the Reason of his Misfortune, and 'twould be very Charitable in you to put him in a Method how to prevent it?

Ans. Dic quibus in Terris! — We beg your Pardon Ladys! Our plain English meaning is only — Whereabouts is this strange Sight to be seen? tho' to speak an ill-natur'd Truth — if the Story and Character be true, and the Gentleman really Virtuous and Modest, with all his other excellent Qualifications, it shoud seem that none of those Ladies have deserv'd him to to whom he has yet made his Addresses — but there is yet some — not Impossible happy she, some Miraculous faultless Woman or other of Pigmilion's Wives Grand-daughters, that's preparing for him — since as a Friend of ours some time since very prettily and oddly — “What Wonder if Nature should work Wonders for such a Wonder in Nature?”

Quest. 5. I've an Offer made me of two young Gentlemen, one a very genteel Man, a great Traveller, and very well qualified for his Years; the other Rich, tho' somewhat rude and unpolish'd: I desire to know how far Ovid's Rule must take place?

— Sed vitate Viros cultum, formamque profectos,  
Quique suas ponunt in statione comas.

Ans. O Sir! or Madam! chuse you whether — Your Hee-Ladiship has forgot that Women don't use to Cap Verser, especially in Latin, any more than our Lady ought to have spoke in the Church, when she saluted St. Bernard — You know now, we dare Swear, the meaning of those two Verses, as well as e're a Society of us all, for there have been Learned Women at the Universities, only you'd a mind to put us to the Trouble of making 'em speak English, which you must give us leave to do with a fashionable Latitude.

— “Shun, Ladies! the Fop  
Whose Formal Fore-Top  
Curls stiff like the Horns he has made,  
The Prim of whose Face  
Ev'n your Kiss wou'd displace,  
Tho' Whoring and Dressing's his Trade.

But now to Answer you and your Friend Ovid, (an excellent Divine he was, that's the truth on't, in those sort of Cases of Conscience) If the Traveller is a Whore-master, nay, Clapt and P——d to the D—— as the lowd Town says, and the rough Fellow has had the Chance to keep Sound and Honest, she may take e'ne which she has most mind to — But how shall she know that? O! the Gentleman is not so little a Gentleman sure but he'll bring a thousand Witnesses of his Merits and Passive Valour in Skirmishes of that Nature, and join with his t'other Friend Cowley in the Penitent Form of Confession, with a little Addition, which must make up for loss of Rhime:

Ten of my lustiest, freshest Years,  
Toss'd in Storms of \* Hopes and || Fears,  
Have all been † burnt in Love, or all been drown'd in }  
— Claret.

\* Preferment.  
|| Bailiffs.  
† It may be e'ne too true to make a Jest on's.

Quest. 6. Which with all that follow, from and (IN) the same Hand with that immediately preceding) After what manner a young Lady may receive the Addresses of her Pretended Lover?

Ans. According as he is — If such a Fiery Gentleman as the Traveller before mentioned, as she loves her own Cittadel, let her keep him further off than at Arms-End, for if but within reach he'll storm like a Tangereen — Let him not come within Gun-shot, Eye-shot, Oath-shot, Maintain all your Out-works, Clear the Ditches, Scour the Counter-scarp, Clap down your Pallisadoes, and all little enough — for if he once wins these, and makes a Breach — no more — the Town's lost beyond Relief of all King William's Army.

Quest. 7. What time wou'd be most convenient to receive his Addresses in?

Ans. When there are most Witnesses about you, if you ever do't at all; for then he can't pretend you Courted him.

Quest. 8. How long she may be before she discover an Approbation of his Courtship?

Ans. Let her stay 'till she is Weary of her Virtue or Honour.

Quest. 9. Whether the admittance of his frequent Embraces may not render him Proud and her Cheap?

Ans. Ay, Ay, dreadful Proud — she may humble the Devil agen when she can, when she has once rais'd him: And then for Cheapness, why what makes Cherries (little plump Rogues, while untoucht all that see 'em long for 'em) what makes 'em so Dog-cheap that they are forc'd to cry 'em about the Streets, and sell 'em at three Pound a Penny, but their having been Embrao'd, or at least Paulm'd and Squeez'd by so many Nasty, Itchy Fellows, that Cheapen 'em, only to snatch a Handfull and away, but will be Choak'd before they'll buy any thing of the poor Woman.

Quest. 10. Whether if the Gentleman write, she ought immediately to Answer him, or as Friend Ovid advises?

Ans. Pray no more Ovid; but in short, Burn his Letters presently, or else they and he together will quickly burn you.

Madam,  
Your Servant!

☞ All Questions relating to Love and Marriage shall be Weekly Answer'd in our Mercury, if sent to Smith's Coffee-House in Stocks-Market.

☞ There is going to the Press a Work Entitled THE LADIES DICTIONARY, which will contain Answers (Alphabetically digested) to all the most Nice and Curious Questions sent concerning Love, Marriage, the Behaviour, Dress and Humours of the Female Sex: As also Answers to whatever Entertaining Questions else are sent concerning our English Virgins, VVives, VVidows, or the Fair Sex in general. This Love Dictionary when finish'd, will serve as a Directory to the Ladies and Batchellors upon all Occasions. This Work will be Publish'd about the 20th. of April next, all Ladies and Batchellors therefore that have any thing very Curious by 'em upon any of the aforementioned Heads, are desired speedily to send it to Smith's Coffee-House in Stocks-Market, Directed For the Undertaker of the LADIES DICTIONARY.

## Advertisements.

☞ THE Second Volume of The Post-Boy robb'd of his Mail, or the Pacquet broke open: To which are added several Ingenious Letters lately sent by several Gentlemen and Ladies to the Persons concern'd in this Frolick; as also Copies of those Private Letters that lately pass'd between — with Observations upon each Letter. Price bound 2 s. 6 d. Printed for John Dutton at the Raven in the Poultry.

A German Gentleman hath brought with him from Holland a Ghymical Powder, very Famous there, and in the Confederate Army for the Wonderful Cures performed by it, in most Curable Diseases incident to the Body of Man. In particular it Cures the Apoplexy, Conclusions, Gravel, Dropsie, Scurvy, Rheumatism, Agues, Feavers, and the Gout it self, in which Disease he that takes five or six Doses of this Powder, will find great Relief, to his satisfaction. This Powder is Sold at half a Crown the Dose, tho' it be Sold in Holland for 4 s. 6 d. and a Person of Quality here not long since having heard of the great Effects of it, sent for it from Holland, and paid 20 l. for one Ounce of it. It will keep good many Years, and therefore fit to be kept in Families to be used upon Occasion. It may be had at the Sign of the Golden Key in Plum-tree-Court, between Holborn-Bridge and Shoo-lane. This Gentleman hath also an Excellent Tincture, and a Plaister against the Gout and all Pains of the Limbs.

## PROPOSALS



# PROPOSALS

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And to the end that This may come to Publick View in his Life-time, he presents the fol-  
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Scholars under them — To all Gentlemen of Inns of Court or Chancery — And to all other  
Private Gentlemen of what Degree soever.

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## PROPOSALS as followeth, viz.

I. **T**He Subscribers to give Thirteen Shillings and Six Pence for each Book in Quires ;  
whereof Six Shillings to be paid at the time of Subscription, and Seven Shillings Six  
Pence at the Delivery of the Book.

II. To Encourage all Persons that shall Contribute to the procuring Subscriptions for Six  
Books, they shall have a Seventh *Gratis*.

III. All who intend to assist in the Advancement of this Useful Work, are desired to send  
in their Subscriptions with all speed unto the Persons here under-named, where Printed Re-  
ceipts shall be given them ; and if they arise to any competent Number, the Book shall be  
finish'd by *Midsummer* next.

The Undertakers are

Dorman Newman, at the *King's-Arms* in the *Poultrey*.  
Richard Baldwin at the *Oxford-Arms* in *Warwick-lane*.  
John Duntton at the *Raven* in the *Poultrey*.

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### Geometrical, Consisting of

Definitions, and Practical Problems.  
Conclusions performed without Compasses.  
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These PROPOSALS are to be had of any of the three Undertakers.

LONDON, Printed for John Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry, 1693.

